

**United States Environmental Protection Agency
Criminal Investigation Division
Investigative Activity Report**

Case Number:

0700-0563

Case Title:

Cass County PWSD 9

Subject of Report:

Report of interview of (b) (6), PWSD #9 employee

Reporting Office:

Kansas City Area Office

Activity Date:

December 13, 2017

Reporting Official and Date:

[REDACTED]

Special Agent

11-JAN-2018, Signed by: [REDACTED]

Approving Official and Date:

[REDACTED]

Assistant Special Agent in Charge

-2018, Approved by: [REDACTED]

Assistant Special Agent in Charge

SYNOPSIS

[REDACTED] provided statements to (b) (6) belief that [REDACTED] wasn't conducting water sample collections as required. In addition, [REDACTED] provided information alleging [REDACTED] was misusing PWSD #9 moneys to subsidize his farm (fuel purchases) and cell service for a (b) (6) (b) (6) iPad.

DETAILS

On December 13, 2017, SA [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] Investigator with the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) conducted an interview of (b) (6), [REDACTED] employee of the Cass County Public Water and Sewer District #9 (hereinafter referred to as PWSD #9). The interview took place at [REDACTED] friend's house, identified as [REDACTED] located at [REDACTED] Street in Harrisonville, MO. Mr. [REDACTED] was present during the interview, more specifically, he (b) (6) sat in an adjacent room but did not participate. The interview was arranged ahead of time by SA [REDACTED] [REDACTED] was provided introductions, presented official credentials and advised the nature of the interview. [REDACTED] agreed to answer questions. The interview was recorded via an audio recording device and is attached to this report. The following information was provided voluntarily by [REDACTED] and is a summary of her statements.

[REDACTED] provided her current address and contact information. [REDACTED] acknowledged her employment at PWSD #9 and her tenure [REDACTED]. Her experience includes, reading water meters, office work, billing and currently, [REDACTED] is the [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] holds a Class C drinking water operator certification/license. [REDACTED] identified [REDACTED] as her supervisor and further stated, [REDACTED] has been her supervisor since starting her employment at PWSD #9. Additional employees provided by [REDACTED] are [REDACTED] and [REDACTED], who, [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] worked at the PWSD #9 for approximately two (2) years. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] conducted the water meter readings and [REDACTED] was the only person to collect drinking water samples.

[REDACTED] was asked if there were any issues regarding the drinking water collection/sample process. [REDACTED] stated she became more concerned or wondered why [REDACTED] didn't delegate the water sampling duties to [REDACTED] when he was hired, [REDACTED] estimated about six (6) years ago. [REDACTED] had suspicions that [REDACTED] was conducting the water sample collection improperly because the time factor. Further stating, [REDACTED] felt it would take quite a long time to collect samples at all the sample locations and have the samples to the Cass County Health Department by 1000 – 1030 hours. On sample collection days, [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] would arrive or be at the office by or around 0800 hours with the samples collected. [REDACTED] just didn't feel [REDACTED] could've collected all the samples and been at the office by 0800 hours. When asked about clocking in or other means of knowing when employees arrive, [REDACTED] stated there is a security system, in which each employee has a separate code but that may only show who arrived first. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] drives a PWSD #9 truck to and from work, so there's no need for [REDACTED] to come to the office prior to collecting the water samples. [REDACTED] only involvement with the samples collected at the sample sites include filling out duplicative paperwork (id numbers, PWSD #9 name, address and telephone

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information) but that was done at least ten (10) years ago. Since then, [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] handles everything regarding the collection and submission of the samples. Wheeler's only involvement is after the samples are analyzed by the lab and the results are sent back to PWSD #9 via mail. Once [REDACTED] gets the results she reviews them and makes copies; one to be stored in a file cabinet and another copy goes to [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] was asked if the use of the PWSD #9 vehicle [REDACTED] includes personal use. [REDACTED] stated yes. [REDACTED] was then asked if [REDACTED] was required to provide personal use information, to include details regarding, mileage, fuel cost/receipts, etc in regards to his [REDACTED] work vehicle. [REDACTED] stated no, nothing that she is aware of.

[REDACTED] was asked to describe the layout of the PWSD #9 office. (See attached "[REDACTED] OfficeMap" for details) [REDACTED] showed storage locations (file cabinets) for pertinent files and documents regarding the operations, to include the sample details and analytical results. [REDACTED] stated the sample collection results (analytical) are maintained at the PWSD #9 office and are presented to the MDNR during inspections. Further stating the results are not required to be sent to MDNR but must be available during inspections. [REDACTED] can't recall the last MDNR inspection but she believes the inspections occur every three (3) years, which [REDACTED] believes they (PWSD #9) are do for an inspection anytime.

In regards to paying the bills (operations cost), [REDACTED] stated the PWSD #9 utilizes "QuickBooks." [REDACTED] stated all bills are reviewed by the Board of Directors (hereinafter referred to as the Board). The Board reviews a monthly report, to include the check book register, profit and loss, budget to actuals, the accounts, basically everything that gets paid. The Board also approves the annual budget. When asked if the Board ever had an issue with the finances, etc., [REDACTED] was unaware of any past issues. However, [REDACTED] stated she raised the issue of [REDACTED] spending money to subsidize his [REDACTED] farm to the Board, regarding fuel purchases. [REDACTED] stated a former PWSD #9 part-time employee, identified as [REDACTED], who also worked for [REDACTED] at his farm, advised [REDACTED] directed him to go to the MFA gas station and use the PWSD #9 gas card to fill up gas cans. [REDACTED] conducted some research during farming season, in which she reviewed the PWSD #9 gas card expenditures used by [REDACTED] and determined the amount of fuel purchased at a given incident would exceed the gallon capacity of [REDACTED] work truck. [REDACTED] indicated she presented [REDACTED], identified as the Board President, the fuel receipts and voiced her concern. [REDACTED] stated, [REDACTED] implied [REDACTED] could have made that up because his [REDACTED] employment at the PWSD #9 didn't end well. [REDACTED] also stated [REDACTED] used the PWSD #9 credit card to purchase fuel and based on her [REDACTED] review of both credit card (MFA gas card and the PWSD #9 credit card) statements/receipts [REDACTED] at one point purchased fuel within a two (2) day timeframe using both cards separately.

In regards to the issues involving [REDACTED] [REDACTED] opined she, [REDACTED] voiced their concerns with [REDACTED] first at the PWSD #9 office. [REDACTED] stated they first brought up their concerns regarding the water sample collection by [REDACTED] and expressed how serious they felt it was. [REDACTED] stated they showed [REDACTED] the water usage reports, to which, would show water usage at sample locations during times water would be collected for samples. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] by stating "why would he do this."

In regards to Board meetings, [REDACTED] takes the minutes or notes during such and maintains the minutes in on-site file cabinet. Additional members on the Board were identified by [REDACTED] as; (b) [REDACTED] (cousin of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] (possible relative of [REDACTED] [REDACTED] friend) and [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] son works for [REDACTED] on his farm).

[REDACTED] was asked if the PWSD #9 employees carry cell phones. [REDACTED] stated yes. In fact, [REDACTED]

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was concerned because she knew, [REDACTED] had an additional line or service for an iPad that belonged to his wife ([REDACTED] that was paid for by PWSD #9. [REDACTED] stated [REDACTED] just called the provider and asked to add the additional line. [REDACTED] stated the additional line cost thirty-four (34.00\$) dollars per month. [REDACTED] stated the Board was not asked or approved the additional (iPad) line/service. [REDACTED] thought the additional line for the iPad was added about six (6) years ago or more. [REDACTED] stated the Board confronted [REDACTED] regarding the iPad line/service but [REDACTED] was not present. [REDACTED] explained there was Board meeting in which herself, [REDACTED] were all allowed to speak individually with the Board members explaining their concerns regarding [REDACTED]. Then after, [REDACTED] went into the Board meeting separately. Following [REDACTED] separate meeting, [REDACTED] stated he ([REDACTED] came out of the Board meeting and was very upset, and verbally "jumped on" Parris. He then told [REDACTED] "well I guess I owe a phone bill" and asked [REDACTED] to add it up. [REDACTED] stated to her knowledge, [REDACTED] never paid the phone bill and thought the one (1) month suspension of [REDACTED] was his punishment. [REDACTED] stated, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] contacted her requesting information regarding the iPad service and if the PWSD #9 paid for the iPad. [REDACTED] stated she advised Mike that she has no record of the PSWD #9 purchasing the iPad. [REDACTED] stated she knew about the iPad line/service approximately 6 years ago because [REDACTED] told her ([REDACTED] he added a line/service for his ([REDACTED] wife's iPad.

[REDACTED] stated when all three ([REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]) decided to do something about the issues regarding [REDACTED] specifically the sample collections concerns, they weren't sure if they should contact MDNR or the Board. They decided to raise it to the Board and they told [REDACTED] first. [REDACTED] stated, [REDACTED] spoke to the attorney ([REDACTED] (sp)) and advised [REDACTED] to give them till October (2017) to figure out what to do. At the November 17, 2017 Board meeting they decided to terminate Parris's position and that [REDACTED] was to be on un-paid suspension for four (4) weeks.

ATTACHMENT

[REDACTED].WMA
[REDACTED]OfficeMap.pdf